

The Tragedy of Hamlet

ther : I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth, forgone all custome of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame the earth seemes to mee a sterill promontorie; this most excellent Canopie the aire, looke you, this brave ore-hanged firmament, this majesticall rooſe fretted with golden fire, why it appeareth nothing to me but a foule and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece a worke is man ! how noble in reason ! how infinite in faculties ! in forme and moving how expresse and admirable ! in action how like an Angel ! in apprehension how like a God ! the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals; & yet to me what is this quintessence of dust ? man delights not me, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seeme to say so.

Ros. My Lord there was no such stuffe in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did ye laugh then, when I said man delights not me?

Ros. To thinke my Lord, if you delight not in man, what Lenten entertainment the Plaiers shall receive from you, we coated them on the way, and hither are they comming to offer you service.

Ham. He that playes the King shall be welcome, his Majestie shall have tribute of mee, the adventurous Knight shall use his foyle and target, the lover shall not sigh gratis, the humorous man shall end his part in peace, and the Lady shall say her mind freely, or the blanke verse shall halt for't. What players are they?

Ros. Eventhose you were wont to take such delight in, the Tragedians of the City.

Ham. How chanceth it they travell ? their residence both in reputation and profit was better both wayes.

Ros. I thinke their inhibition comes by the meanes of the late innovation.

Ham. Doe they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the City ? are they so followed ?

Ros. No indeed, they are not.

Ham. It is not very strange ; for my uncle is King of Denmark, and those that would make mouths at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred duckets a peece for his picture in little : s'blood there is something in this more than naturall, if Philosophy could finde it out.

A Flourish.

Guil. There are the players.

Ham.

Prince of Denmark

Ham. Gentlemen you all know how much I have to un-
derstand of you, come then, th'appurtenance
ny, let me comply with you
Plaiers, which I tell you must
appeare like entertainment
my Uncle-father and Aunt.

Guyl. In what my deare

Ham. I am but mad Northward
therly I know a hawke from

Enter

Pol. Well be with you

Ham. Harke you *Guylde-
ster*, that great baby as you

Ros. Happely he is the se-
an old man is twice a child

Ham. I will prophetic the
marke it : You say right sir,

Pol. My Lord I have new

Ham. My Lord I have new
Actor in Rome.

Pol. The Actors are com

Ham. Buz, buz.

Pol. Upon mine honour.

Ham. Then came each A

Pol. The best Actors in t
History, Pastoral, Pastoral
indevitable, or Poem unlin
nor *Plautus* too light for th
the onely men.

Ham. O *Jeptha* Judge o

Pol. What a treasure had

Ham. Why one faire dau
ved passing well.

Pol. Still on my daughter

Ham. Am I not i'th right

Pol. What followes the

Ham. Why as by lot Ge
passe, as most like it was :